

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 2245

EXDIS

FOR ARA ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY AND S/AR AMBASSADOR ALDRICH
AND DOD/ISA ADMIRAL SHULER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, BB, US

SUBJ: BARBADOS NAVAL FACILITY NEGOTIATIONS

1. BY SEPTEL I REPORT THE PUBLICATION BY THE LOCAL PRESS
WITH NEWS AGENCY DIFFUSION OF EXTENSIVE PORTIONS OF THE BARBADIAN
POSITION DURING THE NAVAL FACILITY NEGOTIATIONS RECENTLY
CONCLUDED. AS THE REPORT EMANATED FROM THE GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION SERVICE THEY NATURALLY ARE HAVING AN IMPACT HERE.

2. ALTHOUGH I AM STILL NOT SURE, IT APPEARS THESE DAMAGING
REPORTS ARE A RESULT EITHER OF A LAMENTABLE ERROR OR A
CALCULATED LEAK WITHIN THE BARBADIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. NEVERTHELESS, THE PREMATURE PUBLICATION OF WHAT I ALWAYS
UNDERSTOOD TO BE OUR FINAL RENTAL OFFER FOR THE FACILITY WITH THE
STATEMENT IN AN OFFICIAL RELEASE THAT BARBADOS REJECTS IT
MOVES OUR RELATIONS WITH BARBADOS TO A NEW CROSSROADS AND
MAKES AN EARLY SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS
INCREASINGLY DOUBTFUL.

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4. I SHALL WAIT TO HEAR FROM FORNMIN FORDE WHAT
EXACTLY IS GOING ON IN THE BARBADIAN GOVERNMENT
AND WHAT THEY EXPECT TO DO ABOUT THESE DAMAGING
REVELATIONS ASSUMING THEY EITHER ARE IN A POSITION OR
OF A DISPOSITION TO COUNTER THEM.

5. BECAUSE OF THIS PUBLICITY THE GOB IS IN A TIGHT SPOT. I DO NOT SEE NOW HOW THE ADAMS GOVERNMENT CAN ACCEPT OUR OFFER AT THIS TIME WITHOUT APPEARING INCREDIBLY INEPT OR WEAK OR BOTH.

6. OUR POSITION ALSO IS NOW MORE DIFFICULT. WHILE I PREFER TO WAIT TO SEE HOW THE GOB PROPOSES TO FACE THIS NEW SITUATION IT WOULD APPEAR TO ME THAT OUR ALTERNATIVES ARE: A) TO LIE LOW AND WAIT FOR THE DUST TO SETTLE A BIT AND THEN RESUME NEGOTIATIONS TO ATTAIN AN AGREED TEXT AND IN THE HOPE THE GOB SUBSEQUENTLY CAN FIGURE OUT A WAY TO ACCEPT OUR OFFER. B) TO STALL, SINCE TIME IS ON OUR SIDE, AND HOPE FOR ANOTHER YEAR'S EXTENSION ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT BARBADOS WOULD GIVE US ANOTHER EXTENSION AND WOULD DO SO FOR \$750,000. C) THAT WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE REACHED AN UNACCEPTABLE IMPASSE DAMAGING TO THE GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND WITH LITTLE HOPE OF A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. IN THIS CASE WE SHOULD INFORM THE GOB THAT WE MUST SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE NECESSITY FOR CLOSING THE FACILITY. OR D) THAT WE RECOGNIZE THE GOB, NOW IF IT WAS NOT BEFORE, IS UNABLE FOR POLITICAL REASONS TO ACCEPT OUR OFFER. WE THEREFORE MUST INCREASE OUR OFFER TO A POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE AMOUNT IF WE WANT CONTINUED USE OF THE FACILITY.
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7. NONE OF THESE ALTERNATIVES ARE IDEAL COURSES UPON WHICH TO EMBARK. I SHALL TRY IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS TO GIVE MY RECOMMENDATIONS. I DO NOT DO SO NOW BECAUSE I WANT TO UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION BETTER. ALSO THE COMMUNICATION SECTION IS ABOUT TO CLOSE AS WE BATTEN DOWN FOR THE GALE FORCE WINDS GENERATED BY A TROPICAL STORM EXPECTED TO STRIKE THIS ISLAND SHORTLY. AS BETWEEN POLITICAL AND TROPICAL GALES I PREFER THE LATTER.
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